AD-A286 055

Final Technical Report for the Office of Naval Research Grant No. N00014-93-1-0441



Submitted by
The Center for Coastal Studies
Provincetown, Mass.

October 1994

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Introduction

The Office of Naval Research under grant number N00014-93-1-0441 provided support to the Center for Coastal Studies for the purchase of equipment and software to aid in the development of field and laboratory protocols for the studying the behavior of large whales. Here we report on progress in the development of techniques associated with the study of whale behavior in combination with the collection of data on the movement patterns of whales, human activities, and oceanographic conditions, a Multivariable Collection Protocol or MCP. The focus of this report is the development of field and laboratory techniques to determine the variables, to design a protocol for field collection, to apply the real time sonagraphic software to collected vocalizations, and to develop a simplified catalog of sounds. The field and laboratory protocols were developed to (1) permit the simple and inexpensive collection of descriptive information surrounding each observation, (2) yield an analysis which would either suggest or confirm the relationship among the selected variables of the many which affect whale behavior, and (3) provide baseline information on the variables permitting a detailed comparative analysis of whale behavior.

Specifically, the equipment purchased under the grant was intended to support the development of the field protocols for (1) documentation of whale vocalizations and (2) management of all incoming data via data loggers. Additional equipment and software was purchased for laboratory analysis of vocal behavior and for integration of observations and analysis using statistical package. This report, therefore is focused on audio documentation, the development of simple field synchronization techniques, and, particularly, on the application of real time sonagraphic software to the development of a simple key - based catalog of sounds.

Field Collection

For the development of the MCP we chose to collect information on the right whale both because this species is poorly understood and because the severely depleted condition of the population makes an understanding of the activity patterns of the species of paramount conservation significance.

Cape Cod Bay, the area where our studies have been ongoing since 1984, has long been known as a habitat where right whales feed and socialize in the winter and early spring. The Bay, therefore, was recommended in the Final Recovery Plan for the Northern Right Whale (Eubalgena glacialis) (National Manne Fisheries Service, 1991) for designation as a critical habitat and so declared in the summer of 1994. Each year since 1984 we have observed as many as 50 right whales in Cape Cod and Massachusetts Bays, primarily in the winter and early spring, feeding and caring for their young (Hamilton and Mayo, 1990). The eastern part of the embayment where small groups of right whales actively feed at or near the surface is particularly rich in seasonally abundant phyto- and zooplankton resources which may attract the whales to the region. In this area of the eastern Bay we documented the surface activity of groups of socializing whales and while collecting basic information on the food resources of the area for combination with data on the vocalization of the whales and information on vessel movement. To develop and test documentation techniques we collected synchronized video and audio recordings coupled with data logging of oceanographic and biological information. Of these observations, we concentrated our development efforts on two particularly rich (and, therefore, challenging from a data management perspective) video-audio segments and associated documentation collected on 26 March 1993 and 31 March 1993, a total of 1.9 hours in duration. The behavioral information was combined with data from oceanographic observations and collections of zooplanktonic foods to yield a raw data set available for analysis.

Laboratory Analysis

In the laboratory, we developed the functional interfaces between the DAT recorder used for field recording of underwater sounds, an analog tape player/recorder used for creating working sound sources, a 486/33 PC running Real Time Sonagraphic (RTS) software obtained from Engineering Design, Belmont, MA, and a laser printer. Using these systems it was possible to operate the audio tape and the RTS side-by-side permitting the running display of individual audio event spectrograms vs. time and comparing these with behaviors available from a data logger running event recording software developed at CCS. It was also possible to run video segments synchronized with the audio record and RTS sonagraphic display to demonstrate the association between observed surface behavioral events and the acoustic record. Through the use of the event and data recording software, we were able to thereby associate the

disparate data bases (see figure 1) from several sources to create the prototype Multivariable Collection Protocol.

Variables

The variables selected for documentation fell into the broad database categories listed in figure 1. For the purposes of this contract, the four development effort was the design of a system for recording and analyzing when vocalizations compatible with the documentation techniques used for the collection of dat', for other databases. It was necessary, therefore, to create a collection technique (see below) which permitted the construction of a real - time comparison of incoming sounds with other databases and to initially categorize and process the acoustic information according to simple catalogs to demonstrate that vocal activity could be documented and compared to other data streams. Fundamental to this approach was the development of methods for application of the Real Time Sonagraphic software (Engineering Design, Belmont, MA) to collected data. Subsequently, with RTS running, we proceeded to collect sonograms of right whale vocal activity analyzed from time synchronized audio and video tapes for the purposes of developing a simplified catalog of vocalizations. Development of the components of the vocalization study were accomplished with the aid of several interns and staff members: Margaret Murphy (field recording techniques), Janet Doherety (RTS use), and Dara Wambach and Nicky Spencer (cataloging).

Results

Examples of the simple descriptive techniques used for the MCP audio database are given in Appendices I and II. The numerically described type sounds are exemplified by the first 10 sonograms in Appendix III and described in Appendix IV.

In addition to the development of a simplified, hierarchical catalog, the collation of data from one observation is presented in the example found in Appendix V.

Continued Work

The development started with the protocols described here will continue to focus on the streamlining of field data collection from the variety of different sources. In particular, we are endeavoring to streamline the field logging by employing pen-based computers

MCP: databases and sources

- Behavioral Observations (video to data log)
- Vessel Activity (direct data log)
- Vocal Behavior (hydrophone to tape to log)
- Orientation (direct data log)
- Oceanographic Data (direct CTD log)
- Biological Data (hand record; field collection)
- Environmental Observations (hand record)
- Demographics/Genetics (photo to catalogs)
- Historic Data (photo to CCS/NEA database)

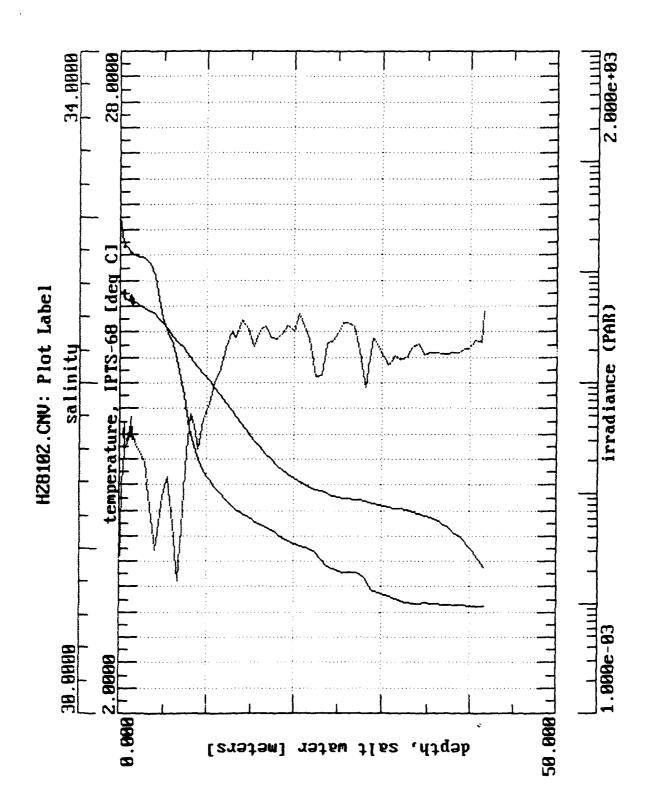
Figure 1

and programs which mimic those used to date but which do not require key entry. Further incorporation of more complete catalogs of both vocal and surface behaviors and the development of similar descriptions for other species of marine mammals also will be the focus of future work. At its present level of development, we have begun to use MCP to develop a database for the assessment of the effects of environmental conditions on whale behavior in the Stellwagen Sanctuary and the Cape Cod Bay Critical Habitat.

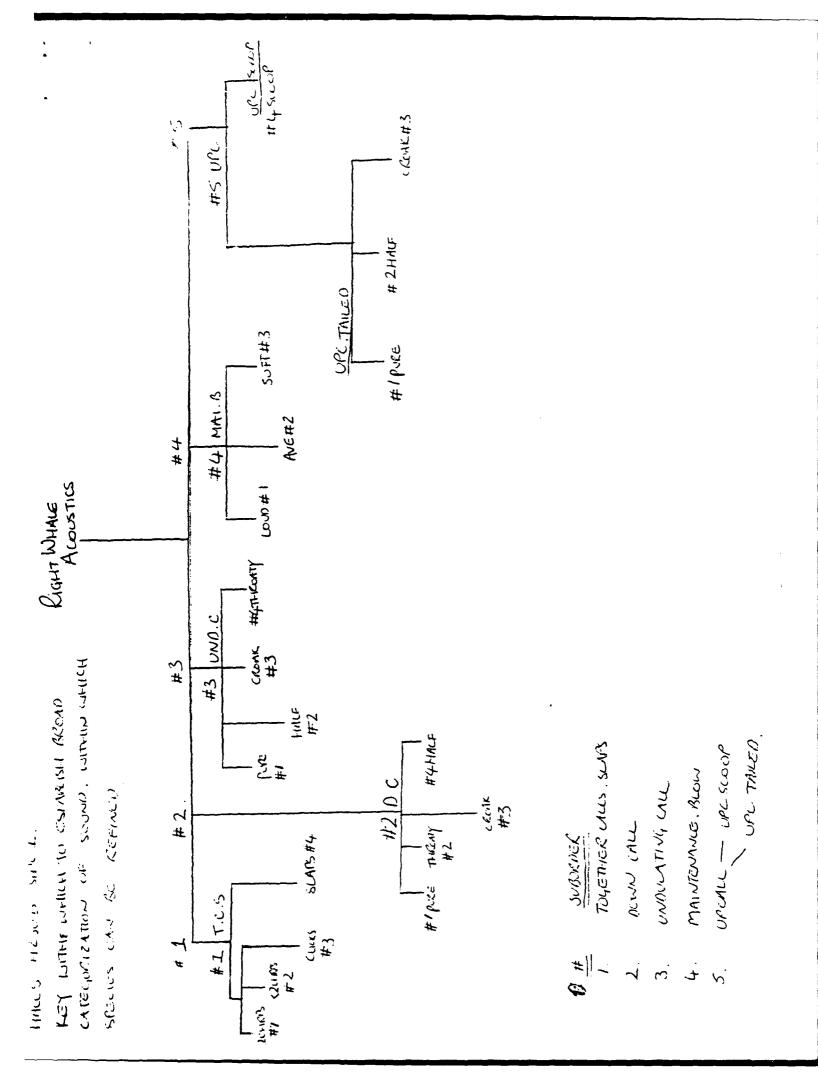
Applications

Although still in the development stage, this holistic approach to the development of baseline data for the documentation of the principal effecting variables influencing the behavior of whales offers considerable promise. Because this documentation protocol is based on simple and inexpensive techniques, the collection of the volume of data needed to develop the baseline information for comparative studies is possible. Further, the template which this protocol suggests includes a variety of oceanographic and environmental parameters which permit the placement of the behavioral observations in the larger context of the observations.

The applications of a holistic, multidisciplinary approach to field behavioral observations are many. Generally these techniques, with the extensive baseline data to support them should considerably improve our ability to design the comparative studies critical to our understanding of the activities of whales in the ocean system and the influences on them. A variety of study areas are suggested: (1) measurement of important characteristics of critical habitats, (2) determination and modeling the effects of a wide variety of human activities on marine mammals, (3) investigation of questions involving the social character of whale populations, and (4) characterization of basic behavior patterns such as foraging, social interaction, and nursery in the context of environmental conditions.



Appendix I
Right Whale Vocalization: Proposed Taxonomic Structure
by
Nicky Spencer



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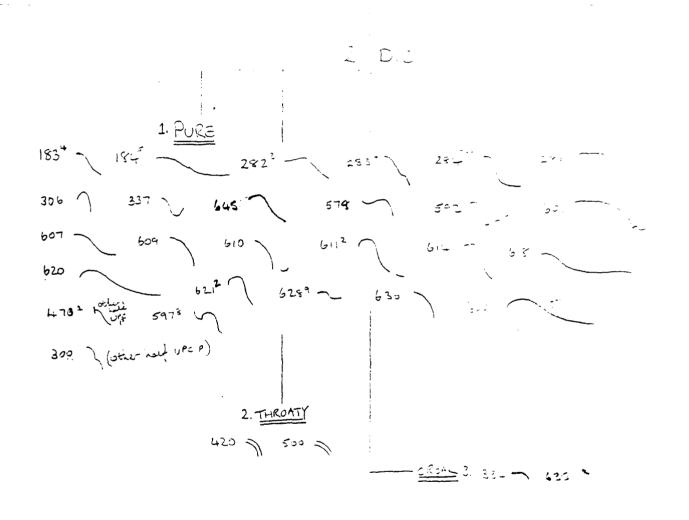
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Appendix II
Right Whale Vocalization: Examples of Types
by
Nicky Spencer

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Appendix II!

Right Whale Vocalization: Examples of Type Vocalizations used in Numeric Descriptions by

Dara Wambach

Trip-Tape-Side-Counter

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Trip-Tape-Side-Counter 7

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Trip-Tape-Side-Counter

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Trip-Tape-Side-Counter

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Trip-Tape-Side-Counter

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4kHz: sample rate: 10,000 Hz frequency resolution: 19.5 Hz

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Appendix IV
Right Whale Vocalization: Numeric Description
by
Dara Wambach

Appendix III

The following describes preliminary use of the RTS sonagraphic system and the notation used in the examples of the numerical descriptions used in the accompanying log data work sheets.

Notes of sample Type Sounds and worksheet, September 6, 1993

Logging-in Type sounds:

me by the words With the goal of using numeric frequency and time duration values to describe similarities and differe through RTS (see Engineering Design manual for establishing logfiles). Using the logfile c:\signal\eg points from RTS sound files which I had previously compiled in a blue right whale vocalization catalo most of the sample sounds I indicated on the printouts the points which were logged into egtype. 2. T the sound they represent, and with the order in which the information is prompted.

- 1 left end of primary element
- 2 highest point of primary
- 3 lowest point of primary
- 4 terminal (left) end of primary
- 5 right side of highest element of sound
- 6 highest level of sound
- 7 lowest point of top of sound
- 8 terminal end of highest sound element

When the location request was repetitive or didn't apply, I often hit Z for zerolog. The marks on the potential for different high/low, etc., assignments according to the frequency (4 or 8 kHz) at which the information recorded in Egtype. 2 are the frequency of the saved file, the rw.6 log number (also an ide sound file name), and type of sound. These entries represent the 20 query limit per logentry.

Coverting logfile to EXCEL:

- *copy egtype.2 to egtype.5 (or something similar)
- *go into DOS to edit, removing header lines
- *bring file into word to create document and even-out all tab spacing (essential for converting log colu
- *Pull rwtype2.doc into Excel, convert to rwtype2.xls
- *most recent file is b:\rwtype3.xls

In excel:

remove extranneous characters, name columns, make calculation columns for desired informati

1. Pr notes

RWTYPE3.XLS

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2	0.641	344	2.248	453	1.644	313
3	1.757	500	1.773	563	2.158	313
4	1.821	500	1.837	531	2.262	359
5	1.004	531	1.5	656	1.973	344
6	0.828	578	1.348	609	1.798	406
7	0.837	469	1.945	500	2.1	219
8	0.986	438	1.911	500	2.164	188
9	0.426	563	2.042	625	2.969	344
10	0.624	578	2.209	625	3.153	625
11	1.228	375	2.067	469	2.303	156
12	1.59	375	2.45	438	2.664	125
13	1.431	344	1.979	438	2.357	
14	1.589	375	2.455	438	2.515	156
15	1.522	625	2.557	906	2.749	375
16	0.655	641	1.651	891	1.954	375
17	1.063	188	2.904	344	1.629	0
18	0.617	94	2.387	328	1.102	0
19	0.938	188	2.304	625	1.114	78
20	1.863	125	3.234	625	2.062	63
21	1.346	125	2.183	188	2.467	109
22	1.701	63	2.135	500	2.493	63
23	0.373	109	0	0	0	0
24	1.984	375	2.105	469	2.061	281
25	2.208	359	2.315	453	2.267	313
26	0.423	125	1.185	266	0.746	0
27	1.953	125	2.695	406	2.261	0
28	2.411	16	2.635	78	2.405	47
29	2.017	0	2.242	188	2.017	0
30	1.606	125	2.499	500	1.715	0
31	1.819	156	2.663	469	2.022	31
32	1.034	78	2.145	313	1.786	125
34	0.924	547	0.924	609	1.036	469

1. Connect spread Sheet will catalogue sounds

a) through ruty pez, XLS column A

log # which is recorded in red in comments seche

b) Also see column & for rule by

part of name

part of name

C: 1 signal \ EW\ L# XXX.

RWTYPE3.XLS

H (1)	I (41)	ン(学)	K 15	L (6)	M (6-
prim right time	prime right freq	high left time	high left freq	time highest	freq highest
2.711	375	1.247	4594	1.787	4656
2.253	422	0.683	3969	0.699	3969
2.451	406	1.838	3938	2.082	4156
2.51	438	2.179	3984	2.179	3984
2.943	438	1.032	4688	1.68	4813
2.768	422	1.113	3969	1.113	3969
2.255	375	1.319	5375	1.319	5438
2.418	422	0.991	3984	0.991	3984
3.121	469	1.108	4313	1.628	4250
3.288	625	1.141	3969	1.141	3969
2.615	297	1.338	3594	1.458	3719
2.982	313	1.919	6094	1.919	6094
2.428	219	1.502	4188	1.612	4313
2.592	188	1.671	3797	1.852	3906
2.902	375	1.626	4344	2.497	4844
2.025	422	0.747	3984	0.747	3984
2.916	250	1.629	3344	2.4	3969
2.404	313	1.159	3500	1.667	3891
2.309	594	1.104	3984	1.104	3984
3.24	594	2.11	5156	2.242	5625
2.692	172	1.975	1984	0	0
2.71	313	1.93	4563	0	0
1.823	109	0.514	922	0.514	922
2.105	406	2.023	1719	2.045	1813
2.315	453	2.235	1750	0	0
1.778	0	1.01	359	1.262	406
2.779	375	2.436	531	2.719	1000
2.641	109	2.4	4000	0	0
2.248	94	2.022	7906	0	0
2.554	438	1.814	2094	2.082	2234
2.784	438	2	2094	2.137	2219
2.532	281	1.644	1406	2.156	1641
1.304	531	1.018	3063	1.018	3063

					A STATE OF THE STA	W
					3 3	
			RWTYPE3.XLS		5.)	
1/1-	1 0 0	· · · · ·	6		c 15-	
<u>N</u> (*)	1) O (7) P	$Q \otimes$	K	7101	
low high time	low high freq		freq high right		rw.6 log type	prim length
1.48			4656	8		1.614
1.75	6 3750	1.756	3750	4	35 full call	1.612
2.21			4125	8		0.694
2.27			3953	4		0.689
1.83			4156	8		1.939
1.54			3953	4		1.94
1.3			5344	8		1.418
2.29		2.291	3984	4	54 full call	1.432
1.33		1.645	4250	8		2.695
1.59			3734	4	49 full call	2.664
2.02	3 3500	2.023	3500	4	53 tail call	1.387
1.91	9 6094	1.919	6094	8	53 tail call	1.392
1.5	4 4125	1.683	4250	8	34 tail call	0.997
1.67	7 3797	1.858	3906	4	34 tail call	1.003
1.68	7 3406	2.837	4219	8	63 fdif call	1.38
1.92	7 3984	1.927	3984	4	63 fdif call	1.37
2.76	3125	3.246	3625	8	36 fdif call	1.853
2.32	4 3156	2.723	3641	4	36 fdif call	1.787
1.21	3844	1.339	3891	4	28 blow	1.371
2.1	5156	2.242	5656	8	28 blow	1.377
	0 0	2.287	2031	4	29 blow	1.346
	0 0	2.106	4563	8	29 blow	1.009
0.89	7 594	1.527	594	4	21 low call	1.45
2.02	1688	2.045	1813	8	43 low call	0.121
	0	2.256	1750	4	110 low call	0.107
1.12	5 313	1.24	375	4	173 low call	1.355
2.62	531	2.725	1031	8	173 low call	0.826
	0 0	2.526	4000	4	456 slap	0.23
	0	2.055	7906	8	456 slap	0.231
1.83	3 2094		2094	4	229 comp c	0.948
2.28!		2.345	2125	8	229 comp c	0.965
1.99		2.232	1469	4	177 comp c	1.498
1.074		1.074	3016	4	269 comp c	0.38

RWTYPE3.XLS

highest length	max freq range	when is primary lowest?	prim x length by type
0.62	4375	0	
1.073	3656	1.003	
0.489	3843	0.401	
0.155		0.441	
1.116	4469	0.969	
0.657	3563	0.97	
0.094	5219	1.263	
1.3	3796	1.178	
0.537	3906	2.543	full calls
0.68	3344	2.529	1.6697
0.685	3563	1.075	
0	5969	1.074	
0.181	4157	0.926	tailed calls
0.187	3750	0.926	1.19475
1.211	4469	1.227	
1.18	3609	1.299	
1.617	3969	0.566	full diffuse calls
1.564	3891	0.485	1.5975
0.235	3906	0.176	
0.132	5562	0.199	
0.312	1875	1.121	blows
0.176	4500	0.792	1.27575
1.013	922	no fluctuation	
0.022	1532	0.077	
0.021	1437	0.059	
0.23	406	0.323	low calls
0.289	1000	0.308	0.7718
0.126	3953	no fluctuation	slap
0.033	7906	no fluctuation	0.2305
0.29	2234	0.109	
0.345	2188	0.203	
0.588	1516		compact calls
0.056	2594	0.112	0.94775
	أربيا المراجع والمراجع والمستوال والمراجع والمراجع والمراجع والمراجع والمراجع والمراجع والمراجع والمراجع والمراجع		

7
prim x low freq
full calls 339.2
tailed calls
140.20
full diffuse calls
187.5
blows
78.25
low calls
118.8 slap 22.5
23.5
- calls
compact calls 297

Appendix V Right Whale Observation: Example H250 The following is a collation of a segment of an analyzed observation containing oriented elements of the top seven databases listed in figure 1. The oceanographic data in the form of CTD profiles was collected at a different location that the behavioral data. This preliminary listing is a facsimile of the raw data stream, a section of a 76 min. observation which demonstrates the display capabilities of this simplified approach to multivariable observations.

Header:

Date: 03-31-93 Time: 140356

LORAN: 13904.2/44030.0

Weather: gentle variable, 9°C., 2/10 hi

Vis: unlimited Cruise: H250

CTD Data: attached verticals

ZPL Density @ sync time +345: 00956/m³

Data follows(relative time base; letters refer to individual a-c):

Time	Behavior	Vessel	Vocal	Orientation
0011	flu a	igear,0700		r=45m;b=150;h=320
0015	flu b			
0016	1/2flu c			
0025		ogear		
0027			up2	
0037		igear,0400		
0038			up2	
0039			lo3	
0043		ogear		04.0/30.8
0047		-	up2	
0051			up2?	
0067			up2	
0070			upt	
0074			up2	
0076			up2	
0079			lo3	
0083			up1	

```
0087
                              up2
0090 swirt
0099
                              up2 dist
0105
                              up1,slp
0109
                              up2
0113
                              101
0127
                              up? dist
0145 swirl
0159
                                                04.0/30.9
                  igear,0500
0172 spt d
0177 swirl
0188
                                          r=50m;b=240
                  ogear
0197
                              up? dist
0223
                              up? dist
0251
                              up? dist
0260
                              lo1 dist?
0288
                              up? dist
0311 spt?
0311 spt a
0312 spt c
                  igear 0900
                                         r=130m;b=300;h=010;5kts,090
0315 rol r b
0317 blog b
0320 spt a
                              up? dist
                                         r=35m;b=060;h=150
0325 spt b
                  ogear
0326 blog a
0329 elog a
0332 bemb a-b
0333 elog b;kik c?
                             up?dist
0333 hup b
0335 eemb a-b
0337 spt b
0345 spt a
0349 rol r b
0354
                                         r=45m;b=100;h=?;03.8/30.8
0356 spt b
                             lo? dist
0357 spt a
0359 blog b
0361 swirt
                 igear0500
0364 spt a
0364 spt c
0365 spt b;arc c
0389 flu b
0397 flu a
0320 arc c?
```